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10/037,545	12/21/2001	Norman Ken Ouchi	Solectron 721	7992

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EXAMINER

NEURAUTER, GEORGE C

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2143

DATE MAILED: 12/16/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

DETAILED ACTION

Claims 1-30 are currently presented and have been examined.

Applicant and the assignee of this application are required under 37 CFR § 1.105 to provide the following information that the Examiner has determined is reasonably necessary to the examination of this application.

The Examiner requests a marked up copy of the specification underlining all new subject matter in order to show the differences in subject matter between the current specification and the parent application 09/417,280, now Patent 6,442,594.

Information Disclosure Statement

The information disclosure statement (IDS) submitted on 17 February 2004 was filed after the mailing date of the instant application on 21 December 2001. The submission is in compliance with the provisions of 37 CFR 1.97. Accordingly, the information disclosure statement is being considered by the examiner.

Drawings

Figure 1A and 1B should be designated by a legend such as -
-Prior Art-- because only that which is old is illustrated. See MPEP § 608.02(g). Corrected drawings in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The replacement sheet(s) should

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be labeled "Replacement Sheet" in the page header (as per 37 CFR 1.84(c)) so as not to obstruct any portion of the drawing figures. If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Objections

Claims 1-30 are objected to because of the following informalities:

Claims 1-30 recite "a form route manager for receiving and sending email to a route, a step-by-step sequence of email addresses". In order to avoid ambiguity, the limitation should read "a form route manager for receiving and sending email according to a route, the route comprising a step-by-step sequence of email addresses".

The Examiner notes that there seems to be a disparity in the claims wherein there exists a "workflow system" which, for example in claim 1, comprises a "form route manager" that performs functions. However, for example in claim 22 and dependent claim 10, the "workflow system" itself performs these similar functions. The Applicant is requested to amend the claims to clearly show which means is performing the functions as claimed.

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Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 1-30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

The claims recite a "workflow system" comprising a "form route manager" and a "project management system" or, alternatively, a "calendar system" wherein the systems communicate with each other. It is unclear as to what communication medium the systems use to send messages.

Claim 12 recites the limitation "...wherein the workflow system sets an indicator..." It is unclear as to how the workflow system may set an indicator.

In order to avoid piecemeal examination and to give the Applicant a better appreciation for relevant prior art, the Examiner will assume that the form route manager sets the indicator. See, e.g., *Ex parte Ionescu*, 222 USPQ 537 (Bd. App. 1984) and MPEP 2173.06.

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Claim 18 recites the limitation "the project segment identifier". There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless -

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by "Teach Yourself Microsoft Project 2000 in 24 hours" ("Project 2000"). See also MPEP 2133.01 and *Paperless Accounting v. Bay Area Rapid Transit System*, 804 F.2d 659, 665, 231 USPQ 649, 653 (Fed. Cir. 1986).

Regarding claim 1, "Project 2000" discloses a workflow project management system, comprising a form route manager ("Messaging Application Programming Interface" which includes "Outlook"; page 497, specifically the paragraph beginning "To communicate by email...") for receiving and sending email to a route ("routing slip"), a step-by-step sequence of email addresses (page 509, specifically "The initial sender designates an order in which the file is to be circulated..." and "Choose

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One after Another to have the file travel sequentially to each recipient"), communicating with a project management system ("Project 2000"), wherein the project management system sends a message at a project segment to the form route manager to initiate workflow on the route. ("routing slip"; page 509-510, specifically "Using the Routing Slip", more specifically "To send a Project file using a routing slip, follow these steps..."; page 510, Figure 23.9)

Regarding claim 2, "Project 2000" discloses a workflow project management system, comprising a form route manager ("Messaging Application Programming Interface" which includes "Outlook"; page 497, specifically the paragraph beginning "To communicate by email...") for receiving and sending email to a route ("routing slip"), a step-by-step sequence of email addresses (page 509, specifically "The initial sender designates an order in which the file is to be circulated..." and "Choose One after Another to have the file travel sequentially to each recipient"), and communicating with a project management system ("Project 2000"), wherein the form route manager sends a message to the project management system at a project segment. (page 509-510, specifically "Using the Routing Slip", more specifically "eventually, the file is sent back to the originator")

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Regarding claim 3, "Project 2000" discloses the workflow project management system of claim 1 or 2, wherein the message includes the time the message was sent (page 501, Figure 23.2, "Date").

Regarding claim 4, "Project 2000" discloses the workflow project management system of claim 1 or 2, wherein the message contains a segment identifier. ("Task Name"; page 501, Figure 23.2)

Regarding claim 5, "Project 2000" discloses the workflow project management system of claim 1 or 2, wherein a workflow route is associated with a project segment. (page 500, specifically "When team members have been assigned to tasks in a project, the team members must be notified of those assignments.")

Regarding claim 6, "Project 2000" discloses the workflow project management system of claim 2, wherein the project management system calculates the project schedule based on the message. (page 500, specifically "the manager opens the response and updates the project with the team member's response"; page 505, specifically "A workgroup member can send a status update on any task assigned to him or her, whether or not the manager has requested a TeamStatus report")

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Regarding claim 7, "Project 2000" discloses the workflow project management system of claim 1 or 2, wherein the message is an email message. (page 497, specifically "Communicating with a Workgoup by Email")

Regarding claim 8, "Project 2000" discloses the workflow project management system of claim 1 or 2, wherein a workflow is initiated when a project segment is initiated or completed. (page 500, specifically "When team members have been assigned to tasks in a project, the team members must be notified of those assignments.")

Regarding claim 9, "Project 2000" discloses a workflow project management system comprising a workflow system including a form route manager ("Messaging Application Programming Interface" which includes "Outlook"; page 497, specifically the paragraph beginning "To communicate by email...") for receiving and sending email to a route ("routing slip"), a step-by-step sequence of email addresses (page 509, specifically "The initial sender designates an order in which the file is to be circulated..." and "Choose One after Another to have the file travel sequentially to each recipient"), and communicating with a calendar system containing a list of events, and wherein the list of events is initiated at a time set in the calendar system. (page 92, specifically "Project is a scheduling tool";

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page 93, specifically "Microsoft Project bases its schedule for tasks on the working days and times defined in a base calendar to which the project is linked"; page 508, specifically "Microsoft Project tasks can be integrated into your Microsoft Outlook task list...Reminders of upcoming dates and deadlines can be set for Project/Outlook tasks")

Regarding claim 10, "Project 2000" discloses the workflow project management system of claim 9, wherein the workflow system sends a message to set or change or delete a time in the calendar system. (page 93, specifically "Microsoft Project bases its schedule for tasks on the working days and times defined in a base calendar to which the project is linked"; page 500, specifically "the manager opens the response and updates the project with the team member's response" and "When team members have been assigned to tasks in a project, the team members must be notified of those assignments."; page 505, specifically "A workgroup member can send a status update on any task assigned to him or her, whether or not the manager has requested a TeamStatus report"; page 508, specifically "Microsoft Project tasks can be integrated into your Microsoft Outlook task list...Reminders of upcoming dates and deadlines can be set for Project/Outlook tasks")

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Regarding claim 11, "Project 2000" discloses a workflow project management system, comprising a workflow system, including a form route manager ("Messaging Application Programming Interface" which includes "Outlook"; page 497, specifically the paragraph beginning "To communicate by email...") containing a route ("routing slip"), a step-by-step sequence of email addresses (page 509, specifically "The initial sender designates an order in which the file is to be circulated..." and "Choose One after Another to have the file travel sequentially to each recipient"), communicating with a project management system ("Project 2000") containing project segments, wherein the project management system sends a message to the workflow system to initiate the workflow on the route comprising setting an indicator of the workflow route in a message and sending the message to the workflow system. (page 509-510, specifically "Using the Routing Slip", more specifically "To send a Project file using a routing slip, follow these steps..."; page 510, Figure 23.9)

Regarding claim 12, "Project 2000" discloses a workflow project management system comprising a form route manager ("Messaging Application Programming Interface" which includes "Outlook"; page 497, specifically the paragraph beginning "To communicate by email...") containing a route ("routing slip"), a

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step-by-step sequence of email addresses (page 509, specifically "The initial sender designates an order in which the file is to be circulated..." and "Choose One after Another to have the file travel sequentially to each recipient"), and communicating with a project management system ("Project 2000") containing project segments wherein the workflow system sets an indicator to the step of the route and sends a message to update the project management system when the step of the route completes. (page 509-510, specifically "Using the Routing Slip", more specifically "eventually, the file is sent back to the originator")

Regarding claim 13, "Project 2000" discloses a workflow project management system comprising a workflow system ("Messaging Application Programming Interface" which includes "Outlook"; page 497, specifically the paragraph beginning "To communicate by email...") containing a set of folders with rules communicating with a project management system containing project segments wherein the project management system ("Project 2000") sends a message to the workflow system to initiate a workflow comprising the steps of preparing a message identifying the workflow to be initiated, and sending the message to the workflow system. (page 509-510, specifically "Using the Routing

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Slip", more specifically "To send a Project file using a routing slip, follow these steps..."; page 510, Figure 23.9)

Regarding claim 14, "Project 2000" discloses a workflow project management system comprising a workflow system ("Messaging Application Programming Interface" which includes "Outlook"; page 497, specifically the paragraph beginning "To communicate by email...") containing a set of folders with rules and communicating with a project management system ("Project 2000") containing project segments, wherein the workflow system sends a message to update the project management system when a specific folder receives a message and executes a message rule comprising setting a rule in a specific folder to send a message to the project management system to update a project segment, and the workflow system sending the message to the project management system when the folder executes the rule. (page 93, specifically "Microsoft Project bases its schedule for tasks on the working days and times defined in a base calendar to which the project is linked"; page 500, specifically "the manager opens the response and updates the project with the team member's response" and "When team members have been assigned to tasks in a project, the team members must be notified of those assignments."; page 505, specifically "A workgroup member can send a status update on any task assigned to him or her, whether

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or not the manager has requested a TeamStatus report"; page 508, specifically "Microsoft Project tasks can be integrated into your Microsoft Outlook task list...Reminders of upcoming dates and deadlines can be set for Project/Outlook tasks")

Regarding claim 15, "Project 2000" discloses a workflow project management system, wherein the system is connected to a computer network and an email system, wherein the email includes a step field and a document, comprising a form route manager ("Messaging Application Programming Interface" which includes "Outlook"; page 497, specifically the paragraph beginning "To communicate by email..."), with an email address, connected to the computer network, capable of accessing a route ("routing slip"), a sequence of email addresses in the computer network (page 509, specifically "The initial sender designates an order in which the file is to be circulated..." and "Choose One after Another to have the file travel sequentially to each recipient"), comprising an in-box adapted to receive email; a first sequencer adapted to as follows compare the step field with the route, define the next email address based on the compare, update the email address to the next email address, update the step field to the next step, an out-box adapted to send email to the next email address, wherein the next mail address includes an in-box adapted to receive email from the

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form route manager, and an out-box adapted to send email to the form route manager ("Messaging Application Programming Interface" which includes "Outlook"; page 497, specifically the paragraph beginning "To communicate by email..."), wherein the form route manager sends a message to a project management system containing project segments, and after comparing the step field to the route, determines if the indicator is set, and if set, sends a message to the project management system. (page 509-510, specifically "Using the Routing Slip", more specifically "To send a Project file using a routing slip, follow these steps..."; page 510, Figure 23.9)

Regarding claim 16, "Project 2000" discloses the workflow project management system of claim 15, wherein the message contains the time when the message was sent. (page 501, Figure 23.2, "Date")

Regarding claim 17, "Project 2000" discloses the workflow project management system of claim 15, wherein the address in the route includes a project segment identifier. ("Task Name"; page 501, Figure 23.2)

Regarding claim 18, "Project 2000" discloses the workflow project management system of claim 15, wherein the message contains the project segment identifier. ("Task Name"; page 501, Figure 23.2)

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Regarding claim 19, "Project 2000" discloses the workflow project management system of claim 15, wherein the project management system contains project segments and relates a project segment to an email based workflow route. (page 500, specifically "When team members have been assigned to tasks in a project, the team members must be notified of those assignments.")

Regarding claim 20, "Project 2000" discloses the workflow project management system of claim 15, wherein the project management system at the beginning of a project segment sends an email to the form route manager to initiate a workflow route. (page 500, specifically "When team members have been assigned to tasks in a project, the team members must be notified of those assignments.")

Regarding claim 21, "Project 2000" discloses the workflow project management system of claim 15, wherein the project management system at the end of a project segment sends an email to the form route manager to initiate a workflow route. (page 500, specifically "When team members have been assigned to tasks in a project, the team members must be notified of those assignments."; page 505, specifically "A workgroup member can send a status update on any task assigned to him or her, whether or not the manager has requested a TeamStatus report")

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Regarding claim 22, "Project 2000" discloses a workflow project management system, comprising a workflow system, including a form route manager for receiving and sending a message along a route of computer addresses in a computer network ("Messaging Application Programming Interface" which includes "Outlook"; page 497, specifically the paragraph beginning "To communicate by email..."), wherein the workflow system communicates with a calendar system containing calendar events wherein the computer address has an indicator defining that a message is to be sent to the calendar system, and the form route manager is adapted to after comparing the step field to the route determine if the indicator is set, and if set, send a message to the calendar system. (page 92, specifically "Project is a scheduling tool"; page 93, specifically "Microsoft Project bases its schedule for tasks on the working days and times defined in a base calendar to which the project is linked"; page 508, specifically "Microsoft Project tasks can be integrated into your Microsoft Outlook task list...Reminders of upcoming dates and deadlines can be set for Project/Outlook tasks")

Regarding claim 23, "Project 2000" discloses the workflow project management system of claim 22, wherein the message is an

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email. (page 497, specifically "Communicating with a Workgroup by Email")

Regarding claim 24, "Project 2000" discloses the workflow project management system of claim 22, wherein the message contains the time when the message was sent. (page 501, Figure 23.2, "Date")

Regarding claim 25, "Project 2000" discloses the workflow project management system of claim 22, wherein the computer address in the route includes a calendar event identifier. (page 508, specifically "Microsoft Project tasks can be integrated into your Microsoft Outlook task list...")

Regarding claim 26, "Project 2000" discloses the workflow project management system of claim 22, wherein the message contains the calendar event identifier. (page 508, specifically "Microsoft Project tasks can be integrated into your Microsoft Outlook task list...")

Regarding claim 27, "Project 2000" discloses the workflow project management system of claim 22, wherein the message is used to add, modify, or delete a calendar event. (page 93, specifically "Microsoft Project bases its schedule for tasks on the working days and times defined in a base calendar to which the project is linked"; page 508, specifically "Microsoft Project tasks can be integrated into your Microsoft Outlook task

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list...Reminders of upcoming dates and deadlines can be set for Project/Outlook tasks")

Regarding claim 28, "Project 2000" discloses the workflow project management system of claim 22, wherein the calendar system contains calendar events and relates a calendar event with an email-based workflow route. (page 93, specifically "Microsoft Project bases its schedule for tasks on the working days and times defined in a base calendar to which the project is linked")

Regarding claim 29, "Project 2000" discloses the workflow project management system of claim 22, wherein the calendar system at the beginning of a specific calendar event sends an email to the form route manager to initiate a workflow route.

Regarding claim 30, "Project 2000" discloses the workflow project management system of claim 22, wherein the calendar system at the end of a specific calendar event sends an email to the form route manager to initiate a workflow route. (page 500, specifically "When team members have been assigned to tasks in a project, the team members must be notified of those assignments."; page 505, specifically "A workgroup member can send a status update on any task assigned to him or her, whether or not the manager has requested a TeamStatus report")

Conclusion

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The prior art listed in the PTO-892 form included with this Office Action disclose methods, systems, and apparatus similar to those claimed and recited in the specification. The Examiner has cited these references to evidence the level of common knowledge of one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention, to provide support for universal facts and the technical reasoning for the rejections made in this Office Action including the Examiner's broadest reasonable interpretation of the claims as required by MPEP 2111 and to evidence the plain meaning of any terms not defined in the specification.

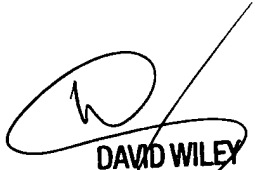
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to George C. Neurauter, Jr. whose telephone number is (571) 272-3918. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday from 9AM to 5:30PM Eastern.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Wiley can be reached on (571) 272-3923. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

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